IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claims 8, 15, 23, and 31 without prejudice or disclaimer, and AMEND claims 1-6, 9-13, 16-22, 24-30, and 32 in accordance with the following:

1. (currently amended) A console switch that selectively connects a terminal to a hardware port of an information processing device that has a plurality of hardware ports connected through a network, the console switch comprising:

a first unit that obtains ~~port~~ information from the terminal, the ~~port~~ information specifying the hardware port of the information processing device to be connected; ~~and~~

a second unit that refers to a predetermined database in accordance with the ~~port~~ information obtained by the first unit, and establishes a connection path between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device;

an examining unit that examines whether transmission and reception data generated between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device are to be accumulated as logs; and

a memory unit that stores the transmission and reception data when the transmission and reception data are to be accumulated as logs.

2. (currently amended) The console switch as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a third unit that automatically connects to each hardware port of the information processing device after activation of the console switch.

3. (currently amended) The console switch as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a fourth unit that, after activation of the console switch, obtains the MAC address and the IP address of the information processing device, associate the MAC address and the IP address of the information processing device with the ~~port~~ information, and stores the MAC address and the IP address associated with the ~~port~~ information in the predetermined database.

4. (currently amended) The console switch as claimed in claim 1, wherein, when a

connection path has not yet been established between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device corresponding to the ~~port~~ information obtained by the first unit, the second unit detects the IP address from the MAC address of the information processing device corresponding to the obtained ~~port~~ information, and then establishes a connection path between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device.

5. (currently amended) The console switch as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a fifth unit that outputs a message to notify that a connection to the terminal has been established, when a connection path between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device has been established by the second unit.

6. (currently amended) The console switch as claimed in claim 1, wherein the ~~port~~ information includes a port number allocated to the hardware port of the information processing device, or a port name allocated to the hardware port of the information processing device.

7. (original) The console switch as claimed in claim 1, wherein the predetermined database is managed as a text file.

8. (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) The console switch as claimed in claim 1~~8~~, wherein the memory unit stores messages to be outputted onto a screen of the terminal.

10. (currently amended) The console switch as claimed in claim 1~~8~~, wherein the memory unit stores data outputted from the hardware port of the information processing device.

11. (currently amended) The console switch as claimed in claim 1~~8~~, wherein the memory unit stores the transmission and reception data in association with one of a date, a terminal path, user information, and a server connection path.

12. (currently amended) The console switch as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a first tuning button that exchanges~~exchange~~ the ~~port~~ information with another console switch~~a device~~ connected to the network, the another console switch having a second tuning button that exchanges the information with the console switch.

13. (currently amended) A system comprising:

a terminal;

an information processing device that has a plurality of hardware ports; and

a console switch that is connected to and interposed between the terminal and the information processing device, and establishes a connection path between the terminal and a hardware port of the information processing device,

the console switch comprising:

a first unit that obtains ~~port~~ information from the terminal, the ~~port~~ information specifying the port of the information processing device to be connected; ~~and~~

a second unit that refers to a predetermined database in accordance with the ~~port~~ information obtained by the first unit, and establishes a connection path between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device;

an examining unit that examines whether transmission and reception data generated between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device are to be accumulated as logs; and

a memory unit that stores the transmission and reception data when the transmission and reception data are to be accumulated as logs.

14. (original) The system as claimed in claim 13, wherein the information processing device is cascade-connected.

15. (cancelled)

16. (currently amended) A system comprising:

a first console switch; and

a second console switch that is connected to the first console switch through a network ~~in such a manner that the first console switch and the second console switch face each other~~,

the first console switch and the second console switch each selectively connecting a terminal to a hardware port of an information processing device that has a plurality of hardware ports connected through a network,

the first console switch and the second console switch each comprising:

a first unit that obtains ~~port~~ information from the terminal, the ~~port~~ information specifying the hardware port of the information processing device to be connected; ~~and~~

a second unit that refers to a predetermined database in accordance with the ~~port~~ information obtained by the first unit, and establishes a connection path between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device;

an examining unit that examines whether transmission and reception data generated between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device are to be accumulated as logs; and

a memory unit that stores the transmission and reception data when the transmission and reception data are to be accumulated as logs.

17. (currently amended) A method of selectively connecting a terminal to a hardware port of an information processing device that has a plurality of hardware ports connected through a network,

the method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

obtaining ~~port~~ information from the terminal, the ~~port~~ information specifying the hardware port of the information processing device to be connected; ~~and~~

referring to a predetermined database in accordance with the obtained ~~port~~ information, and then establishing a connection path between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device;

examining whether transmission and reception data generated between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device are to be accumulated as logs; and

storing the transmission and reception data when the transmission and reception data are to be accumulated as logs.

18. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising ~~the step of~~ performing automatic connection to each hardware port of the information processing device after activation of the method.

19. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising ~~the step of~~, after activation of the method, obtaining the MAC address and the IP address of the information processing device, and storing the MAC address and the IP address of the information processing device in the predetermined database, the MAC address and the IP address being associated with the ~~port~~ information.

20. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein, when a

connection path has not yet been established between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device corresponding to the port information obtained in the ~~port~~ information obtaining ~~step~~, the IP address of the information processing device is detected from the MAC address of the information processing device corresponding to the obtained ~~port~~ information, and a connection path is then established between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device.

21. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising ~~the step of~~ outputting a message to notify that a connection to the terminal has been established, when a connection path between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device has been established.

22. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the ~~port~~ information includes a port number allocated to the hardware port of the information processing device, or a port name allocated to the hardware port of the information processing device.

23. (cancelled)

24. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising interactively~~the step of~~ exchanging the ~~port~~ information with a device connected to the network.

25. (currently amended) A computer program product for causing a computer to selectively connect a terminal to a hardware port of an information processing device that has a plurality of hardware ports connected through a network,

the program comprising:

instructions for obtaining ~~port~~ information from the terminal, the ~~port~~ information specifying the hardware port of the information processing device to be connected; ~~and~~

instructions for referring to a predetermined database in accordance with the obtained ~~port~~ information, and then establishing a connection path between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device;

instructions for examining whether transmission and reception data generated between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device are to be accumulated as logs; and

instructions for storing the transmission and reception data when the transmission and

reception data are to be accumulated as logs.

26. (currently amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 25, further comprising instructions for performing automatic connection to each hardware port of the information processing device after activation of the computer.

27. (currently amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 25, further comprising instructions for obtaining, after activation of the computer, the MAC address and the IP address of the information processing device, and then storing the MAC address and the IP address of the information processing device in the predetermined database, the MAC address and the IP address being associated with the ~~port~~ information.

28. (currently amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 25, wherein, when a connection path has not yet been established between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device corresponding to the obtained port information, the IP address of the information processing device is detected from the MAC address of the information processing device corresponding to the obtained ~~port~~ information, and then a connection path is established between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device.

29. (currently amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 25, further comprising instructions for outputting a message to notify that a connection to the terminal has been established, when the connection path between the terminal and the hardware port of the information processing device has been established.

30. (currently amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 25, wherein the ~~port~~ information includes a port number allocated to the hardware port of the information processing device, or a port name associated with the hardware port of the information processing device.

31. (cancelled)

32. (currently amended) The computer program product as claimed in claim 25, further comprising instructions for interactively exchanging the ~~port~~ information with a device

connected to the network.